

Dear Mr. Hemingway----

May 31

I will tell you a little story about what my husband did with one gun he had and then perhaps you will not do anything so foolish as to send him another. Besides if you should, I would be inclined to black your eye. Here is why. It seemed to Tom one night that he must have a beer before retiring, in spite of the fact that he had been drinking alcohol in one form or another for quite some time previous.

Excuse me. I got this far, after having Tom whoop "He's sending me a gun!" and then read your letter, and now I rather feel that the story will keep, *and that the gun will be cherished.*

Here are the circumstances under which your letter arrived. It is Thursday; Tom has Wednesday and Thursday nights off and I have Thursday, away from the OWI where I play nursemaid to sixteen machines, AP, UP and the rest. As you can imagine I spend most of my time watching for items on Spain and sneaking the carbons into my purse, ~~and~~ which later Tom and I hold up to the light, and speculate about, and then we get on to the same old talk, When We're In Spain. Tom does the talking and I just watch that good look/<sup>that comes</sup> to his eyes, which is a good change from the usual look, which means that he's thinking that he's getting older every hour and every hour without a Spanish Republic is an hour lost from the good life. I don't mean just his own life, although a person can't help being concerned about their individual lifetime, but the good life in general, for everyone.

So we had ten good hours' sleep, with both of us in the bed at the same time. This happens <sup>twice</sup> ~~once~~ a week. The rest of the time the bed's never cold, what with Tom working at night. We got up and Tom went out to look for eggs, which there is a shortage of and returned without any (warishell) and told me there was no mail. We drank coffee and sat about reading the



paper, and finally after Tom had finished it and ponderously rolled half a dozen cigarettes, he pulled the envelope out of his pocket, and started very carefully to cut it up the side.. When I asked he informed me with a great air of satisfaction that it was from a friend named Hemingpot. Mail day somewhere in Europe may be great, but at 235 East 26th, it's terrific, when it's from someone Tom cares about.

Tom is now reciting "It was Din, Din, Din ! A beggar with a bullet through his spleen !" You have made him feel very mellow.

I find I don't like any of my possible remarks of comment on your report of what you've been occupied with, so I'll not make any.

Incidentally, I hope you don't object to my making so free with your letters to Tom. I shall proceed on the assumption that you don't.

We are awaiting news about my brother, who was at Stalag Luft 111 and then liberated. I am anxious to have Tom meet him for he is a superior example of a member of my family, in fact of a member of the human race if I remember him correctly. To date Tom has met only an aunt, a stuffy pompous woman who lives in a fancy apartment on Sutton Place, and spends her time being a Grey Lady (Very worthy Red Cross work) and taking a reducing course. We were married at her place, and the fact that it was two days after Mr. Roosevelt had been elected, with our humble help, and she was mourning for Mr. Dewey was enough to obliterate any chances of my cementing a relationship which to me isn't worth the price of the cement anyway. Family ties are funny, aren't they, because if you don't like the related person there aren't any ties at all, but she can't seem to understand that. The wedding was at ten in the morning and Tom and I took great pains to arrive separately; as a result neither of us took the license. Then to Aunt Mary's horror we didn't have ten bucks to give the minister and had to collect a kitty. After all these details were smoothed over and we were legally stuck and sitting around drinking the champagne from Bloomingdale's, Tom yawned and then tried to explain it by saying "I was up late drinking with some



Spaniards, and after I finally got to bed, in the middle of the night a telegram arrived from some damn fool--" and he turned to me and said "What the hell time was that?" You'd have enjoyed it. But of course Aunt Mary will never forgive it.

Right now, sitting in the sunlight on the lower east side, I'd like to be sitting in a rowboat I used to sit in in the Big Basin of the New Meadows River near Bath, Maine, shouting to the people on the yachts from Boston, at anchor. I wonder where some of those boats have been now. Or better still I'd like to be on our own good sea-going boat, heading out. I bet you do lie awake at night thinking about your boat. I do, about one I've never even had.

I wish for you whatever you want out of the rest of it, a transfer, if that's it, and for us a chance to see you not too long away.

*Helen Bennett*